

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUENOS 06153 201613Z
ACTION H-03

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO NIACT IMMEDIATE

SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1851

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 6153

DEPT ALSO PASS ACDA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MNUC, PARM, BR, AR

SUBJECT: CONGRESSMAN PAUL FINDLEY'S MEETING WITH ATOMIC
ENERGY CHIEF - REAR ADMIRAL CASTRO MADERO

SUMMARY. IN MEETING WITH CONGRESSMAN FINDLEY ON
AUGUST 18, CNEA HEAD CASTRO MADERO QUIETLY EXUDED
CONFIDENCE THAT NEITHER ARGENTINE NOR BRAZILIAN
NUCLEAR PROGRAMS WOULD EVER LEAD TO PRODUCTION OF
WEAPONS. HE EXPRESSED INTEREST IN FINDLEY IDEA OF
MUTUAL BILATERAL SAFEGUARD INSPECTION SYSTEM BETWEEN
ARGENTINA AND BRAZIL.

1. CONGRESSMAN FINDLEY REQUESTED TO MEET CASTRO
MADERO TO DISCUSS NON- PROLIFERATION ISSUE IN LIGHT OF
PENDING FRG SALE TO BRAZIL OF RE-PROCESSING FACILITY.
AFTER INTIAL PRESENTATION BY FINDLEY REGARDING CON-
CERNS OF U.S. CONGRESS ON NON-PROLIFERATION, CASTRO MADERO
INDICATED THAT GOA DID NOT SHARE THESE CONCERNS. GOA
HAS NO FEAR OF A BRAZILIAN NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROGRAM
AS THE RESOURCES NECESSARY TO DEVELOP NUCLEAR
DEVICES COULD NOT BE DIVERTED FROM URGENT BRAZILIAN
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DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS. CASTRO MADERO STRESSED THAT
GOA HAD NO INTEREST IN DEVELOPING NUCLEAR WEAPONS.
SERIOUS TECHNICAL PROBLEMS IN PRODUCING WEAPONS
GRADE PLUTONIUM AND ENORMOUS COSTS INVOLVED ARE
INSURMOUNTABLE OBSTACLES FOR WEAPONS PROGRAM EVEN
IF GOA HAD DESIRE, WHICH IT DOES NOT, FOR SUCH DEVICES.

2. IN REPLY TO INQUIRY FROM FINDLEY REGARDING POSSIBILITY OF A MUTUAL BILATERAL INSPECTION PROGRAM BETWEEN ARGENTINA AND BRAZIL TO INSURE THAT NO MATERIAL WAS BEING DIVERTED, CASTRO MADERO RESPONDED THAT IDEA APPEARED ATTRACTIVE ESPECIALLY AS IT MIGHT EASE CANADIAN SAFEGUARD CONCERNS. HE STRESSED THAT CANADIAN INSISTANCE ON FULL SCALE AND FUTURE SAFEGUARDS WAS MAJOR PROBLEM FOR GOA NUCLEAR EFFORT. HE POINTED OUT THAT ALTHOUGH GOA IS NOT WILLING TO SIGN NPT AS IT CONSIDERS THE TREATY DISCRIMINATORY, ARGENTINA WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION TO ADOPTING IAEA SAFEGUARDS, IF BY SO DOING THE CANADIANS WOULD GUARANTEE TO PROVIDE TECHNOLOGICAL HELP FOR ARGENTINE NATURAL URANIUM POWER PROGRAM IN THE FUTURE, ESPECIALLY HEAVY WATER TECHNOLOGY. THIS HE INDICATED WAS NOT THE CASE, AND POSED MAJOR DILEMMA FOR GOA.

3. CASTRO MADERO INDICATED THAT HE SAW LITTLE DANGER FROM TERRORIST THREAT TO STEAL PLUTONIUM DUE TO ITS VERY HIGH TOXICITY AND TENDENCY TO BECOME "POISONED." ONLY DANGERS TERRORISTS POSED WOULD BE THEIR STEALING AN ENTIRE NUCLEAR DEVICE. HE FURTHER ADDED THAT HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT IAEA SAFEGUARD PROCEDURES WOULD PICK UP ANY DIVERSION OF MATERIALS.

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4. CASTRO MADERO SAID THAT ALTHOUGH HE HAD VERY CLOSE PERSONAL RELATIONS WITH LEADERSHIP OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE BRAZILIAN NUCLEAR PROGRAMS, THERE WAS VERY LITTLE CONTACT AND TECHNICAL EXCHANGE AT LOWER LEVELS DUE TO DIFFERENT TECHNOLOGIES BRAZIL AND ARGENTINA HAVE ADOPTED. THIS WAS ALSO TRUE OF TECHNICAL RELATIONS BETWEEN ARGENTINA AND U.S. WHICH HE HOPED MIGHT BE STRENGTHENED OVER TIME.

5. CASTRO MADERO AT CONCLUSION OF MEETING DESCRIBED HIS FAMILY'S TWO YEARS AT GE NUCLEAR FACILITY NEAR LIVERMORE, CALIFORNIA, AS THE "BEST TIME OF OUR LIVES." HE EXPRESSED GREAT WARMTH FOR U.S., ESPECIALLY THE HOSPITABLE CALIFORNIANS. HE LAMENTED THAT HE WAS LOSING HIS COMMAND OF ENGLISH DUE TO LACK OF USE.

6. FOR RIO AND BRASILIA. CONGRESSMAN FINDLEY WISHES TO REITERATE HIS REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT WITH SENIOR BRAZILIAN NUCLEAR OFFICIALS.
CHAPLIN

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED TO ACDA.

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